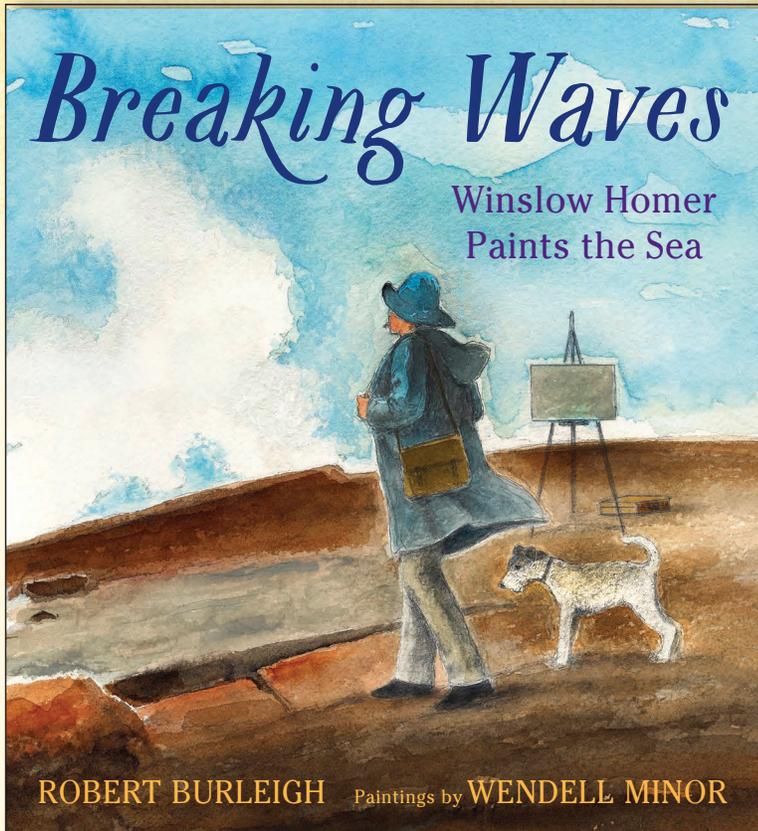


HOLIDAY HOUSE

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



Neal Porter Books · HC: 9780823447022

Breaking Waves: *Winslow Homer Paints the Sea* by Robert Burleigh paintings by Wendell Minor

A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

★ “A beautiful and rich work of literary nonfiction.” —*School Library Journal*

ABOUT THE BOOK

When Winslow Homer watches the sea, he studies it patiently, making sure to notice every detail before bringing it to life again in his paintings.

The fabled painter Winslow Homer always had a deep respect for the elemental power and beauty of the ever-changing ocean. He knew it took patience to get his painting just right to capture the life of the ocean.

Breaking Waves: Winslow Homer Paints the Sea describes the artist’s process from season to season. Readers are shown the many blues, greys, browns, and golds that Winslow Homer used to depict the changing sea. Additional content in the back of the book further explains his work and passion for the ocean.

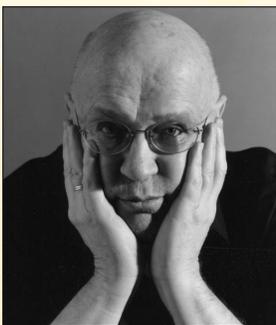
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Study the cover of the book. What does the title reveal about Winslow Homer? Why is Winslow Homer looking so intently at the sea? Discuss why Homer is wearing rain gear. Point out the “breaking waves.” How many colors do you see?
- Describe Homer’s house. How is the porch important to Homer? What is Homer’s attitude toward the summer activity around his house by the sea? Explain why he puts out a sign that says, “Mr. Homer is not at home.” How does this imply that fans of Mr. Homer are eager to meet him?
- Discuss the meaning of “landscape” and “seascape.” Take a close look at the title page. How does Wendell Minor capture the “landscape” and the “seascape” that Winslow Homer sees?
- The sea changes as the seasons change. Why does Homer call the winter sea a “wild struggle between two vast parts of nature”? What are the “two vast parts”? Explain the “endless battle.” How is this battle captured in the illustrations in the book?

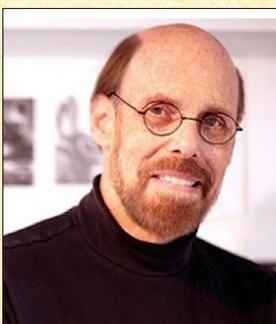


- Homer records observations about the sea in a notebook that he carries with him each day. Explain what he means when he writes, “You must wait and wait patiently.” Discuss how Homer is patient as he labors to create on canvas what he sees when he looks at the sea.
- How do the colors of the sea change at different times of the day? Take a close look at the art in the book and discuss how Wendell Minor creates the motion of the sea. Point out the color and charcoal line used to create this motion. How do the text and illustrations of the book help you to see, hear, and feel the sea?
- What is the puzzle that Homer is constantly trying to solve with his paintings? Describe the pieces that must fit together to create a work of art. Debate whether Homer eventually solves the puzzle. He wants people to see the “power of nature—and the power of art.” How do the writer and artist of this book communicate the “power of nature—and the power of art”?
- Personification is a figure of speech that gives human-like qualities to an object or thing. Point out the personification in the following sentence: “Shimmer! Light glittering on tiny whitecaps. Sun and Sea are dancing.” Identify other uses of personification in the book. The author writes: “Each day the sea speaks to him [Homer], always with a different voice.” What are the different voices of the sea?
- Simile compares two unrelated things using “like” or “as.” Discuss the simile in the following sentence: “Like a sea captain steering his ship from the deck, Winslow paces back and forth on the balcony of his studio home, gazing out toward the distant water.” Find other examples of simile in the book.
- Homer says: “The life I have chosen gives me my full hours of enjoyment . . . The sun will not rise, or set, without my notice and thanks.” How is Homer always trying to discover? How does he give thanks through his paintings? Take a look at the images of Homer’s work at the end of the book. How does Wendell Minor capture Homer’s art style? Explain how capturing Homer’s art style is a way of giving thanks to this great American painter.

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Robert Burleigh is the award-winning author of many books for children, including *The Adventures of Mark Twain* by Huckleberry Finn, illustrated by Barry Blitt; *Night Flight*, illustrated by Wendell Minor; *Black Whiteness*, illustrated by Walter Lyon Krudop; and *Sylvia’s Bookshop*, illustrated by Katy Wu. His many other books include *Hoops*, *Stealing Home*, and *Clang! Clang! Beep! Beep!* He lives in Michigan.



Wendell Minor is the illustrator of many award-winning picture books for children, including *Edward Hopper Paints His World* with Robert Burleigh, as well as *Wild Orca*, by Brenda Peterson; and the *New York Times* bestselling *Reaching for the Moon*, by Buzz Aldrin. He lives in Washington, Connecticut.

Photo credit: Scott Phillips

